



 NALA

CERTIFIED

PARALEGAL



About Us

NALA leads the paralegal profession by providing a voluntary certification program, continuing legal education, and professional development for all paralegals.

Since 1975, NALA has been trusted to provide exceptional continuing education and professional development designed specifically to advance paralegals in their careers.

NALA provides current information about the paralegal profession, continuing education (publications, courses, and webinars), networking opportunities, professional certification programs, occupational survey reports, and other publications to help paralegals excel in the workplace.

We are the leading paralegal association nationwide representing more than 18,000 paralegals who are individual members and members of NALA affiliated associations. NALA sets the national standard for paralegal excellence.



Vanessa Finley, MBA

NALA Chief Executive Officer



Who is a **NALA Certified Paralegal?**

Established in 1976, the Certified Paralegal **CP**[®] credential is key to respect and opportunity throughout the legal profession. Becoming a NALA Certified Paralegal means you have successfully passed a rigorous examination of the knowledge necessary to be an effective paralegal. Earning this credential is a proud achievement that comes with a career-long commitment.

The Certified Paralegal credential has been acknowledged by the American Bar Association as a mark of high professional achievement. More than 47 paralegal organizations and numerous bar associations also acknowledge the **CP**[®] credential as the definitive paralegal certification. The Certified Paralegal program is also the first and only paralegal program to be accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

CP Program

The Certified Paralegal examination is a comprehensive assessment based on federal law and procedures. Successful completion of both the Knowledge and Skills Exams are required to obtain the **CP**® credential.

KNOWLEDGE EXAM



- Multiple choice questions
- Administered on-demand, year-round
- Must be successfully completed to be eligible to take the Skills Exam

SKILLS EXAM



- Written assignment (essay)
- Administered during four testing windows:
 - February
 - April
 - July
 - October

EXAM FEES



FIRST TIME EXAMINEES

- \$250 — Member Rate
 - \$275 — Non-member Rate
 - \$125 — Paralegal Student Member Rate
 - \$150 — Paralegal Student Non-member Rate
- (fees cover one Knowledge Exam and one Skills Exam)*

RETAKE EXAMINEES

- \$60 — For each subsequent attempt for either Knowledge or Skills Exams

CP by the Numbers

In 2016, the NALA Certifying Board conducted a Job Task Analysis Study. This study examined the duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace.

Based on the analysis of that study, improvements in technology, and recent refinements by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the NALA Certifying Board developed a new structure for the CP exam in 2018.

NALA's Certifying Board ensures that the CP exam remains an accurate, consistent, and relevant reflection of today's paralegals.

7k+

The number of active CPs as of 2019

19k+

The total number of paralegals who have been awarded the CP credential



The only NCCA accredited paralegal certification program.



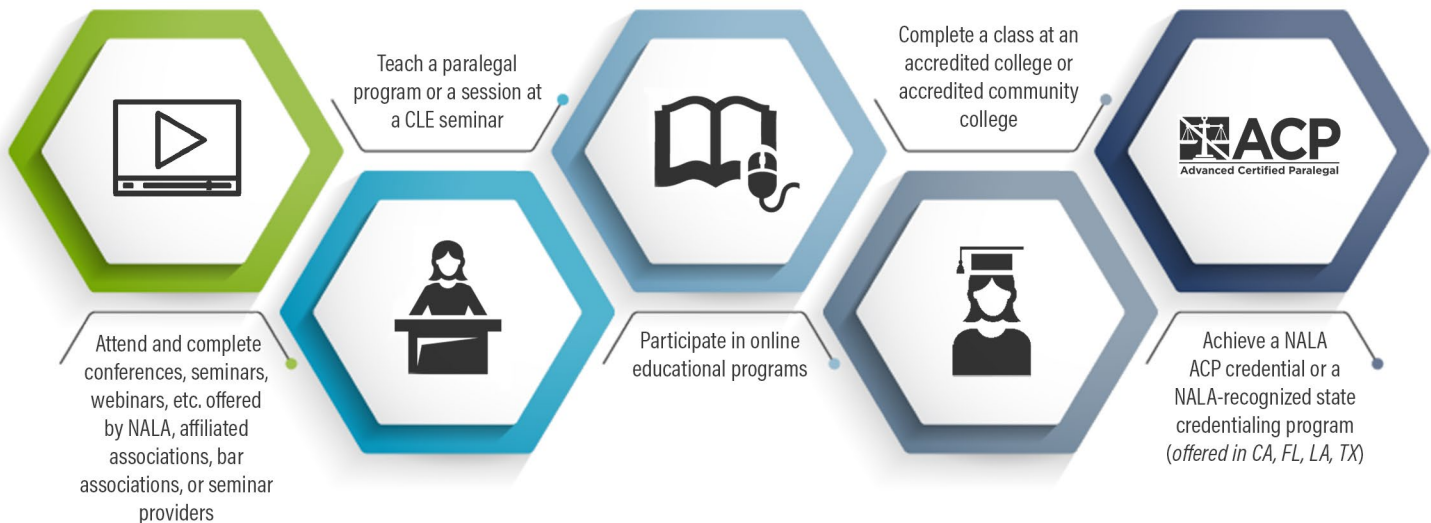
The CP credential is recognized worldwide

\$4,880

The average salary increase with the CP credential

CP Commitment

The **CP**® credential demonstrates a career-long commitment. To remain current, the **CP**® credential requires continuing legal education (CLE) and must be renewed every five years . Below are the different ways to earn CLE credits.



Eligibility

Candidates for certification **must meet one** of the following requirements outlined in Categories 1, 2, or 3 at the time of filing an application form.

1. Graduation from, completion of, or current enrollment in the last semester or quarter of a paralegal program that meets one of the criteria listed in sections (a) through (e) below.

- (a) a paralegal program approved by the American Bar Association; or
- (b) an associate degree program in paralegal studies; or
- (c) a post-baccalaureate certificate program in paralegal studies; or

(In addition to the official school transcript, candidates must submit an original course catalog or an original letter from the school registrar or program director attesting that the program is a post-baccalaureate certificate program requiring a bachelor's degree as a prerequisite.)

- (d) a bachelor's degree program in paralegal studies; or
- (e) a paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of which at least 15 semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) are substantive legal courses.

(Candidates applying under Category 1(e) may combine college hours from more than one institution. The candidate must have graduated from a paralegal program consisting of a minimum of 15 semester hours (or 225 clock hours or equivalent quarter hours). Evidence of the minimum hours required under Category 1(e) must be provided with the application form.)

2. A bachelor's degree in any field plus one year of experience as a paralegal or successful completion of at least 15 semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of substantive paralegal courses.

(Those applying under the provision allowing for additional course work in lieu of the one-year work experience must submit an official school transcript showing completed course work).

3. A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven (7) years experience as a paralegal plus a minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing legal education completed within a two-year period prior to application for the examination.

(Evidence of continuing legal education credit is documented by the attorney/employer attestation that must be signed as part of the application form or by submitting certificates of completions for CLEs taken.)

CP FAQs

How do I apply?

Once eligibility is determined, candidates can apply online or submit a paper application via mail, e-mail, or fax.

What is the application process?

A candidate must submit the CP application, fee, and supporting documentation via online, e-mail, fax, or mail. Candidates will be contacted via e-mail within two business days. If the application is approved, the e-mail will include instructions for scheduling the exam. If the application is not approved, the e-mail will indicate the additional information required to complete the application.

What should I study for the exam?

The CP exam is a comprehensive assessment based on federal law and procedures. You can find the description of the exam sections and suggested study material under the Examinees section of the Certification page on NALA's website.

What happens if I don't pass?

Candidates who do not pass the Knowledge or Skills Exam must wait 90 days after the attempt to retake the exam. Candidates will have up to three attempts within 365 days from the date of authorization to test to pass the Knowledge or Skills Exam. Retake applications must be submitted with a \$60 retake fee.

NALA Certification vs. Certificate

Occasionally, paralegals will call themselves "certified" by virtue of completing a paralegal training course or another type of preparatory education. Although a school may award a certificate of completion, this is not the same as earning a professional certification by an entity such as NALA. A school's certificate is a designation of completion of a training program.

As an employer, why should I hire a NALA Certified Paralegal?

By hiring NALA Certified Paralegals, employers can have peace of mind knowing their paralegals have passed a demanding examination of the knowledge and skills needed to provide excellent paralegal services. Attorneys can utilize NALA's certification as a credible, dependable way to measure a paralegal's ability and to enhance the marketability, productivity, and profitability of their businesses.

Need More Help?

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact NALA at 918-587-6828 or testing@nala.org.



The **Advanced Certified Paralegal** program is designed to recognize a paralegal's commitment to continued growth and life-long learning.

2k+

The number of active ACPs as of 2019

\$8k+

The average salary increase for a paralegal with the ACP credential

4k+

The total number of paralegals who have been awarded the ACP credential since 2006

Looking for Advancement?

While the CP exam tests your general legal knowledge, NALA's **Advanced Certified Paralegal** (ACP) courses are designed to advance your education in specific areas of law. These web-based, interactive courses are available 24/7, allowing you to complete them at your own pace. Upon payment of the registration fee, you have a full year to finish an advanced course. Information about fees for each ACP course are available on NALA's website. An average course is about 20 hours in length and organized into multiple chapters. You are tested on each section of the course, with unlimited attempts to complete each exam. You can earn up to 20 hours of CLE for completing an ACP course.

A CP certification is not a prerequisite for taking an advanced course; however, only CPs can earn the distinguished ACP credential. Those who are not CPs can acquire the ACP credential if they complete their CP certification within one year of the successful completion of an advanced course.



The following courses are eligible for the ACP credential:

Business Organizations - Incorporated Entities

Criminal Litigation

Discovery

E-Discovery

Family Law:

- *Adoption and Assisted Reproduction*
- *Child Custody, Support and Visitation*
- *Dissolution Case Management*
- *Division of Property and Spousal Support*

Land Use

Real Estate Principles

Trial Practice

Additional courses coming soon.



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